

Hit The Beach!

July 2001 Volume 6, Number 3

The Southern California ASL Club Newsletter



The President's Corner

By Brandon Liesemeyer

Hello all, I don't really have any club news or deep presidential insight this issue so I thought I'd talk about the past events, the upcoming tournament and the campaign game I'm a part of.

We're in the afterglow of the DYO one-day. On the 23rd of June 12, ASL grognards descended upon Matt C's house. The format was one that as far as I know was a first for the club...DYO. For one of the mini tournaments at last year's WCM, Jim had concocted a couple of partial DYO scenarios to play. The first scenario takes place in Central Stalingrad. We used a copy of Don Petros's soon to be released map. Yet another reason those who didn't show, missed out. The concept came from our play testing of the Central Stalingrad CG. During the play test, a very bloody sub-battle developed over the central rail station. In this Battle two companies (20 sqds) of well-led conscripts (read: commissar led) had to hold off a platoon of Pioneers and a platoon of storm troops with all the toys. The battle raged and climaxed with a human wave through the station to throw the attackers out. Jim's recreation of this action is well done, and many of the games developed in the same way. Some guys overestimated the effectiveness of the scratch German force while others underestimated. For those who underestimated it was over quick. Those that made the

Germans pay for each hex, delayed them, but risked not having enough for the end. So there was some balance that had to be achieved for both sides. Look for a tweaked version in an upcoming newsletter.

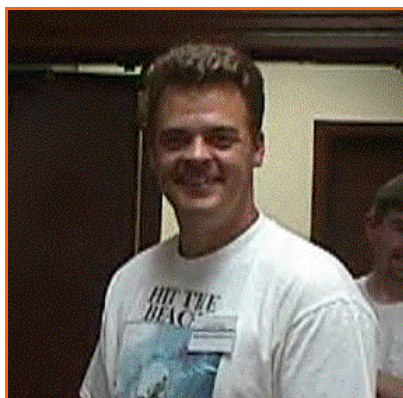
The second battle was a German overrun of an American held crossroads in Belgium...you guess the Battle. This one was larger with more toys on both sides and there were many wrecks by the time this one was over. This scenario and the format in general were great. You had no idea what your opponent had, did he have AT capability or not? Could pre-reg OBA start falling at any moment? Were you facing 747s or 546s? Could armor suddenly appear on your flank? All these unknowns made for some cautious Ger-

mans. I don't want to give too much away, as this scenario will also be in an upcoming newsletter.

Well, we've been threatening to do it for quite some time. The time has finally come to play the grand daddy of all scenarios in a one-day format. Dust off your dice cup, re-read your rules, do whatever it takes, but don't miss the next one day tournament at Biola! On August 18 the SoCal ASL Club will be playing BINGO...**Hill 621** bingo, that is. Kind of like the bingo from WCM, but each square could happen in a single game of hill 621. Over the next couple of weeks go ahead and list/submit a couple of your preferred bingo squares to the club mailing list, and let's have some fun with this. My submittal: German 9-2 or 10-3 dies from sniper attack!

I wanted to put in a plug for ABTF. Over the last six months Fred Timm, Steve Thorne, and Jim Aikens (German), Eric Morton, and myself (British) have been waging war in Arnhem. I've heard many guys sing high praise for Red Barricades and I have to agree that the game is very fun providing many tactical challenges. Times have changed though and you can be one of the relics ranting about Guards Counterattack or you can try something new. We've been doing just that and we have all been having a great time in the process. Each side having truly kick butt troops means each side feels comfortable with their OB. I have to admit I've found myself wondering if a 20 +4 is worth taking on several occa-

(Continued on page 7)



Brandon "got DC... need British" Liesemeyer

What's Inside?

By Matthew Cicero

Howdie ASL fans! I'm back with another jam-packed issue of *Hit The Beach!* We've got so much stuff this time around, I had to expand the issue! As of this writing, 18 Club members have submitted things to the newsletter this year! Wow! Thanks! I can only ask that you guys keep it up. A few more Clubbers each issue and we'll get a clean sweep of everyone and some pretty sweet-ass newsletters!

Before I get to this issue of *HTB!* I wanted to send out a personal congratulations to the Simonsens on the arrival of their bundle of joy, Peter Lewis, and to Rob Stai for landing that awesome new job! Great news! Chuck Hammond...we'll miss you in far-off Germany...so we expect some serious VASL time and the occasional shipment of beer!

Well, back to *HTB!* This issue we have a pile of great articles.

Scenarios: This issue we have two scenarios. *HTB! 10: "Rotes Rathaus"* and *HTB! 11: Breakout from Borisov*, both brought to us by Bruce Kirkaldy. Bruce has been working overtime designing scenarios and I think you'll agree with me that the variable forces of *Rotes* make it a fun play. *Borisov*, meanwhile, is Bruce's excellent remake on the old SL classic...so enjoy! And don't forget to take a look through Bruce's Design Notes for some added insights.

Roll Call: I had to Deliberately Immobilize Ron Mosher before he'd consent to an interview, though the results were well worth it! Ron's a great opponent so I hope you guys all get the chance to match cardboard with him sometime...just make sure you demand an all-armor scenario!

AARs: This issue I bring you a book review of *The Duel for France, 1944* while Jim Aikens (and Brandon!) fills us in on what happened at the DYO One-Day.

The Grogard Speaks! Check out Matt Romey's "The Joys of VASL PBEM" and get geared up for some ASL with all those Clubbers moving on to greener pastures. Also, I came up with an old trick I've been using a lot lately for our "Did You Know?"

Moments in History: This feature returns this issue with Scott Thompson's great article, "Unknown Weapons of the U.S.M.C." Maybe it's just me but I get a kick learning about the history of weapons and vehicles! Thanks, Scott!

D.Y.O.: This issue, we will be featuring Robert Hammond's final "Spice" installment, "Spicing Up the Game, Part III." We'd really like to know if anyone has given these rule variants a whirl...drop me a mail!

Rounding out the issue are a pair of **ASL Challenge!** (thank you Rob Stai!), a great quote by Major Willie Jones, the latest Cup Ladder standings and a brutal **OUCH!** from Paul Simonsen.

Remember to fill out a Feedback Form for me and let me know what you really thought about this issue. Enjoy!

Editor@socalasl.com



Matt "got CC?" Cicero

D.Y.O. Summer Tourney After Action Report

By Jim Aikens

On June 23rd our Club launched its first D.Y.O. one-day tournament. We had 12 Club members in attendance at Matt Cicero's house. The first scenario was "The Rail Station," which uses a special HASL mini-board of Central Stalingrad. Sides were chosen at random, and players were able to purchase their OBs from a list of available forces, similar in some ways to a campaign game. The results were surprisingly balanced overall. The three quickest results were German wins, but the three remaining games, which proved to be closer matches, ended up as Russian wins. In the end, the consensus was that some of the point values for individual units needed to be changed slightly, but otherwise the scenario was fun and definitely replayable. The second scenario was titled "The Marnach Strongpoint" featuring one board recreating the village of Marnach, one of the many American strongpoints along Skyline Drive in the opening hours of the Battle of the Bulge. Again, sides were determined randomly, and each player purchased their OB from a list of available forces. The consensus seemed to be that this was well worth the effort, although victory conditions needed to be adjusted in favor of the Americans. In the end, the victory conditions did not matter, as we had already agreed to have two winners, the best scoring player from each nationality. That proved to be Brandon for the German players and Rich Mosher for the Americans. Both will receive a WCM tee shirt. On top of this great day of ASL, Matt hosted a terrific barbecue, with hamburgers, jumbo hot dogs, chips, soda and beer. This proved to be as big a hit as a social event as our Club has hosted.

I have to put in my 3 cents here and say that I think my favorite scenarios are ones where you can "purchase" part or all of your OB. I really enjoy buying from the available list of goods...but I always seemed to need just one more point! -ed.



Jim "got CG?" Aikens

ASL Challenge! An Ordnance Quiz...

This time we are working over those brain cells that know Chapter C...

Answers on Page 7.

1. Can an ATTACKER declare a Gun Duel against a concealed enemy?
2. Can a Gun using IFE lay a Fire Lane? Can it make a Snap Shot?
3. Name two types of Ordnance that can fire at a target 3 hexes away and 4 levels higher than the firer.
4. Is a motorcycle fired upon using the Vehicle or Infantry Target Type?
5. Which of the following can score a CH? 1) MMG, 2) 12.7mm MG, 3) Aircraft MG
6. What is the usual maximum caliber Gun that is eligible for a Multiple Hit?
7. What is the Case E: Firing Within Hex To Hit DRM for a tank in a woods hex?
8. Will a Gun making a Deliberate Immobilization shot gain Acquisition on its target?
9. A Gun fires SMOKE. Does the Acquisition To Hit DRM apply? Does it maintain Acquisition?
10. Can a concealed target be acquired by a unit firing with the Infantry Target Type?

Roll Call!

Ron "got Infantry?" Mosher

HTB!: How and when did you get started with ASL?

RM: ASL Background or What I Did for My Summer Vacation in 1958. Summer 1958, I discovered the AH games Dispatcher and Tactics II (\$3.00 apiece). Played and bought many more over the next years, until that great hiatus known as College with the three G's. Then returned to the fold in 1974 when Red Star/White Star (SPI) was given to me, as I lay in a hospital bed (don't ask). Re-discovered the whole genre and proceeded to buy everything in sight until Squad Leader came out.

Yep, got the Purple Box and everything that followed. My gaming was SL and more SL, until GI and the damned thing had gotten overloaded with rules and more rules. So another hiatus, as I gave up on SL Gaming. Then, after moving to SoCal, noticed adverts for one of the Strategicon Tourneys with SL at SL level, as a default, and went to my first SoCal tourney. It was 1986 and On All Fronts was running the Tourney. I got to tell all the GI level guys--

"Sorry no optionals" and enjoyed every minute of it.

Meanwhile in a smaller group off to the side, some guys were playing in an "ASL" tournament and I dropped by to watch and see what this "new" thing was. When I found out there weren't going to be changes after changes and you could always say "no optionals" I bought in to ASL. I've been playing ASL ever since.

HTB!: How did you learn the game?

RM: As to the "learning" of the Game, most was by getting my head beat on by such good gamers as Cloyde and Dan Plachta at the various conventions, as well as reading and re-reading the rules. Don't you kids try this at home though, it only worked because I had a long history with SL (wore out two game sets, and had purchased and used a third over the years before ASL).

HTB!: How do you prefer to play?

RM: I will always love FTF at Tourneys. That way I get to play a plethora of different Gamers, all with different styles. Add this to the moans and cheers, as the dice slap us each silly and then give us back a chance in the Game. FTF is the best.

HTB!: What is your favorite nationality?

RM: As to favorite Nationality, it's a toss-up be-

tween the Italians and any other feeble power. You have to understand that you are given a lot of these smaller sized/powered units, so my proclivities with the dice are given a better chance to balance the odds (didn't think I'd give up a chance to whine about my dice did you?).

HTB!: What's your favorite kind of game?

RM: Now give me some cardboard wimps (a lot of 'em) and a straight mano-a-mano battle of Infantry in heavy terrain and I'm happy. Don't like the armor versus armor battles because they are too dice dependant and most of the Infantry-Armor combined arms stuff relies too much on armor...and if your armor is toasted early, the game is over. But with straight Infantry versus Infantry, movement and "perceived" threats can have you several turns deep before a shot is fired. That's SL and ASL at its best.

HTB!: Do you have a favorite scenario list?

RM: Now the editor asked if I had a list of "Favorite" scenarios, and the answer is...not really. I only have a "type" of scenario I like, as mentioned before. With so many scenarios around I can't say any are my "favorites," since I try to always play a new scenario. This may be a result of the early tourney play here in

(Continued on page 13)

After Action Report: Book Review

By Matthew Cicero

D-Day has always been one of the more well known events of World War II. But when you ask the question, "What happened next?" the reply usually varies from the obvious "hedgerow fighting" to the vague "Paris was liberated." Blumenson's book, based in large part on his *Breakout and Pursuit*, a volume in the official series *The U.S. Army In World War II*, provides a much better answer.

Blumenson's book covers the events of July, August and September of 1944. It skips over the events on and immediately after D-Day and it also stops short of an in-depth discussion of the German "miracle in the west." The narrative, combined with several maps, provides a division level view of the hedgerow fight, the breakout, the pursuit and the exploitation by the Allied forces in France. The story sweeps the reader along at a pace matching the historical events. As units grind through the hedgerows, the words convey a heavy and ponderous atmosphere. As the Allied forces leap across the French countryside, the impression is one of joyful exuberance for the Allies and exhausted frustration for the Germans.

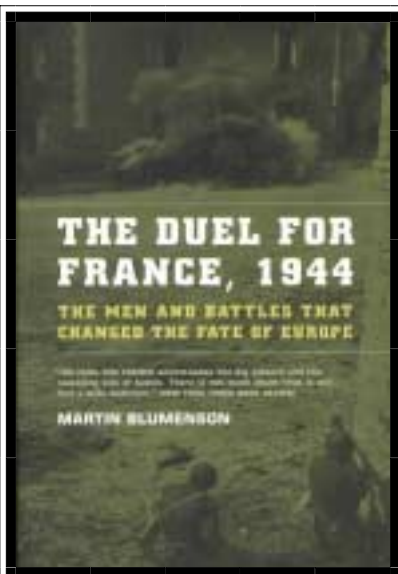
The events of the summer of 1944 are described in a logical, chronological progression. We jump from one formation to another and advance each along the timeline equally. The effect created is much like the movement of units on a boardgame map with each 'turn' of the game representing several weeks of time. The major difference is the way Blumenson personifies the combatants through anecdotes about the battles and troop movements. Blumenson's treatment of the commanders on both sides is particularly effective in describing and humanizing the events of his book. We meet the men that led, from division commanders on up to Eisenhower and Hitler and we see how their decisions influence the situation in 1944.

The book describes the planning of the American breakout from the hedgerow country. It discusses the debate over Montgomery's true intentions near Caen. The successes leading up to the breakthrough on the Cotentin are then detailed. The German defenses are also covered including the grinding loss of irreplaceable forces and the lack of mobility due to the Allied air superiority. The story details the commitment of Patton's forces to the continent and the buildup of men and materiel. The breakthrough quickly leads to the Breakout and the gathering of momentum by the Allied forces in France. Blumenson covers the failed and wasteful German counterattack and the subsequent Allied rush into Brittany. We next read about the isolation of pockets of resistance in Brit-

tany's ports and the simultaneous push east by the remaining Allied forces as the Breakout becomes the Pursuit and then the Exploitation. The rush east across France develops the Falaise Pocket and the book covers well the inexplicable failure by the Allies to enclose the German divisions in Normandy in the Pocket. It also describes the harassment of the retreating Germans by Allied armored columns and aircraft. The invaluable support rendered by the FFI throughout the campaign is described along with the Allied conflict over the liberation of Paris and the conduct of French forces. The Exploitation winds down as the book covers the stretching of the Allied logistical support to its limits and the strategic decisions that permit the final few advances, despite dwindling supplies, troop exhaustion and growing maintenance concerns, in September.

This book is an enjoyable read, especially given the relatively equal treatment of Allied and German viewpoints. It is sometimes confusing due to the large number of units involved and the unfortunate military convention of identifying units by number rather than a unique name...after a while, you can get lost amidst the many numbers! One other peeve is that the maps could have been better located to permit easier reference relative to the text. Overall, though,

as a broad account of the major activities in the summer of 1944, it is a very good book.



ISBN 0-306-80938-9

Over the past five years I have played more than a dozen ASL scenarios by email over the Internet. To some, ASL may seem unsuitable for play-by-email (PBEM), because players must interact constantly throughout its multiple phases. However, the invention of VASL by Rodney Kinney has drastically altered that reality. Playing ASL by email using VASL is easy, fun, and, dare I say, sometimes an improvement over face-to-face play (FTF).

Of course nothing can replace the camaraderie of getting together with a buddy for a face-to-face game. But playing by email has some tangible advantages. Foremost is the ability to fit a scenario into a busy schedule. Can't ever seem to get a game in due to lack of time? You and your regular FTF opponent can't seem to coordinate your schedules? Well, PBEM allows you to spend about 10 minutes a day playing ASL at your leisure; e.g. during lunch at work, or before going to bed at night. With as much daily effort as most of us put into reading the ASLML, or reading Annuals, or clipping counters, over the course of a few weeks or months you eventually will have played a scenario that you would never have played otherwise!

The other big advantage to PBEM is that, because your opponent is not sitting there waiting for you to decide on your move, you have plenty of time to contemplate strategies, try different tactics, look up rules, etc. In other words, you can learn a *lot* from a PBEM game that you normally might skirt over in a FTF game. PBEM games can often be more fruitful than FTF games in this regard.

These advantages are in addition to the typical advantages of VASL: terrain modifications, HIP units that you can see but your opponent can't, labeling counters, no clean up, and child- and cat-proof maps.

The biggest disadvantage to PBEM is that it disrupts the flow of the game somewhat. To some players, this change of pace is a disconcerting change to the ASL dynamic. All I can say is that, if most of your quality ASL time is spent reading past Annuals in the latrine, then beggars can't be choosers. It really isn't that bad, and is a small price to pay for the benefits received. However, this change of pace does mean that large scenarios with lots of movement tend to become unwieldy. "Clash Along the Psel" is not an optimum VASL PBEM scenario.

General PBEM Procedure

The foundation of playing VASL PBEM is the Honor System. In the name of expediency you must let your opponent resolve the effects of his attacks on your units. Some find this strange at first, but once you are involved you will realize how benign the concept really is. It's surprisingly easy to trust your fellow ASL comrade to do what's right and not cheat you out of DRs.

Given that we will roll for each other's units, a Player Turn can be broken down into as few as 3, usually 4 to 5, mailings. Each email has attached to it a log file. A log file is a record of all moves and comments made from the time he clicks VASL's "Write Logfile" button to the time he clicks the "End Logfile" button. When your opponent opens up this log file, he will be able to move through it line by line by hitting the "Step" button. In this way, it simulates the real-time, sequential nature of ASL during any given Phase.

An important concept to grasp is that you can step through an existing log file while writing a log file of your own. The log file records not only the comments/actions of the player writing the log file, but also the opponent's comments/actions that appear when the "Step" button is pressed. This probably sounds more confusing than it is. A short examination of the example coinciding with this article should go a long way in making the log file format clear to the reader. Note how some of the German's actions are repeated in the Russian's log file.

So how are Player Turns broken down into log files? It can vary, but it usually follows the outline shown below. Note that each file name below would normally include an indication of the current game turn (e.g. "A1" for the American's first turn).

1. "RPh-MPh1.log" The ATTACKER's Rally Phase through (partial) MPh.

- *The ATTACKER rolls for WC, and conducts his RPh activities.* The DEFENDER would have done his RPh at the end of his turn, normally (unless it is the first Player Turn of the Game, in which case he usually doesn't have any activities; if he does, he would usually do it before the game).
- *The ATTACKER conducts all Prep Fire activities,* rolling for effects on the DEFENDER's units when applicable.
- *The ATTACKER moves his units.* He moves them one at a time, announcing MF/MP expenditures after every action. In most cases, the MPh needs to be broken down into a number of log files, as the ATTACKER needs to see the results of previous moves before he can decide his next moves. This is the trickiest and most time-consuming part of PBEM games – how many units should the ATTACKER move before saying "I'll pause here, I want to see what happens before moving more units." He needs to use his judgment, as he doesn't want to make a mistake, but he also does not want to bog the game down by moving one unit per log file.

2. "DFF1.log" The DEFENDER's Defensive First Fire.

- *The DEFENDER conducts his First Fire* on units that moved in the ATTACKER's first MPh log file. The trickiness of the MPh/DFF continues, as the DEFENDER may get effects on his opponent that will change the ATTACKER's future moves. How does the DEFENDER know when to say "I'm going to stop reading now, and send this back to you?" Fortunately, PBEMers have created an elegant system for dealing with this question. Before moving his units, the ATTACKER will give instructions to his opponent as to when to stop reading the log file. For instance, if it is a crucial part of the game, and every move counts he may say something like "Stop reading if you reveal any units or fire at anybody." But if he is just scouting with half-squads, he may say, "Don't stop reading, no matter what happens to any of my units." Usually it is somewhere in between: "Stop reading if you break or pin anybody, or if I move into a location containing residual firepower." The DEFENDER then reads the MPh log file step-by-step until the end, or until the conditions set by the ATTACKER are met. As long as the instructions are clear to your opponent, then the game runs very smoothly. Any fire is recorded in the DEFENDER's log file and sent back to the ATTACKER.

3. "MPH2.log" The ATTACKER continues his moves (there can be from one to three or more MPh log files, depending on the situation). If the ATTACKER finishes his MPh, he should state so clearly in the log file.

4. "DFF2-DFFn.log" The DEFENDER continues his Defensive First Fire. There can be any number of DFF log files, but the last one will include the Defensive Final Fire Phase in its entirety.

5. "AFPh-CCPh" The ATTACKER's Advancing Fire Phase through CCPh.

- *The ATTACKER conducts his Advancing Fire Phase.*
- *The ATTACKER conducts his Routs.*
- *The ATTACKER conducts the DEFENDER's Routs.* If the options are too great for the DEFENDER then often the log is kicked back to him to do his routs. The DEFENDER may wish to explicitly instruct the ATTACKER to do so, especially if the DEFENDER intends to voluntarily break and rout a unit. But if the DEFENDER has no broken units, or if his options are few, or if his routs are inconsequential, then the ATTACKER can proceed with his turn and let the DEFENDER conduct or modify routs later.
- *The ATTACKER conducts his Advances.*
- *The ATTACKER conducts his Close Combat attacks.* This can get sticky, as CC is a simultaneous event, and both sides have to declare

(Continued on page 5)

their attacks. Fortunately it is made simpler by the fact that the DEFENDER has a log file coming up (his RPh). Thus, the ATTACKER can often roll for Ambush, announce his Attacks, and roll for results. Then the DEFENDER can, at the start of this next log file, step through the log and announce his attacks after the ATTACKER announces his, but before seeing the results. Sometimes there are surprises, such as when the DEFENDER wants to retain Concealment, or if there was a HIP unit. But usually it's very smooth, and often the ATTACKER can execute the entire CCPh himself.

- **Concealment Gain.** At the end of the CCPh, the ATTACKER may conceal eligible units. However, it is not uncommon for the results of the CCPh to change who is or isn't eligible. A good solution is for the ATTACKER to conceal his units, with the expectation that the DEFENDER may deny (or even grant additional) concealment depending on his CCPh actions (if any).
- **The ATTACKER conducts his RPh activities.** This is not official ASOP order, but does it really matter? It's speeds up play.

6. Repeat until Game End.

Bear in mind that the above is merely an outline. If both players are flexible and use common sense along the way, then the log files will simply create themselves.

Pre-game log files consist of 1) Defender setup; 2) Attacker setup and Concealment Gain; 3) Defender sniper placement and Concealment gain. The Attacker sets up his sniper in his first RPh.

Email Protocol

PBEM is no different than live VASL (or FTF, for that matter) in that there is certain etiquette that enhances communication between the players. Not only do they speed up play; they also minimize the chance of hard feelings later on. Here are just some of the customs that I have encountered in my PBEM gaming:

- Decide on special rules ahead of time. IFT vs. IIFT, BI, Interrogation, etc. Remember, as opposed to most FTF games, you are often playing opponents that you have never met before. Be forthcoming about your preferences, and do not have hard feelings if your opponent does not want to play with your pet optional rule.
- State up front your expected pace of the game ("I average 1 log file per day" or "3-4 mailings per week"). Once the game starts it can become very uncomfortable if one opponent is constantly anxious for a log file because you told him you could send three logs per day! Go easy on your opponent regarding pace. Sure you should expect him to meet the pace that you agreed to before play, but these games can go on for months. Life *will* get in the way from time to time. If he's slammed at work for a week, cut him some slack. On the other hand, if you find that time has gotten crunched, it is your obligation to let your opponent know about it.
- Decide upon a log file naming convention early. The one I have presented in the example is the one that I like, but there are others. As long as both players agree that you can keep track of the game much more easily. I recommend as well that you create a defined folder for each PBEM scenario, with subfolders for each player turn (e.g. in Gavin Take, "A1", "G1", "A2", etc. folders in it. "A1" would contain all the log files from the American's Turn 1, etc.). This will facilitate finding the latest log file when you want to open it.
- Once play starts, communicate as explicitly as possible. Always declare AM, CX, armored assault, etc. before moving the unit. Also, it is very important to type in the MF/MP after every expenditure. This way the DEFENDER knows that, when he reads the MF/MP, he can fire on the unit. Otherwise, he doesn't know if the move was intentional or not (sometimes a slip of the mouse will accidentally move the wrong unit).

- Use abbreviations as much as possible. Many are defined ASL acronyms, but many are improvised for PBEM. For instance "TTB" means "top to bottom", i.e. I'm rolling for a bunch of units starting from the top down. "AM," means "assault move" and "NAM," means "non-assault move."
- Respect the rules of Right of Inspection; you are not allowed to inspect stacks before play commences, and after that you can only inspect stacks to which you have LOS.
- If rolls are lost due to truncating a log file, then they *must* be re-rolled! Ex: The ATTACKER has two units: a squad and a tank. He instructs the DEFENDER to stop reading the log file if the squad breaks. He moves the squad, then the tank, which Bounding Fires and scores a kill on an enemy tank. The DEFENDER, while stepping through this log file, shoots at and breaks the squad. As a result, the DEFENDER stops reading the log file and bounces it back to the ATTACKER. At this point the Bounding Fire shot *never happened*. If the ATTACKER still wants to fire the tank, he has to roll again in the subsequent MPh log file.
- Point out any anomalies you see in the scenario. Examples include concealed stacks with an unconcealed unit or SW in the middle, or an odd stacking of counters such that a SW appears unpossessed, or a unit appears to have another unit's SW. VASL confusion regarding which player "owns" which counters can sometimes be to blame.
- Be a good sportsman. Don't complain about the VASL dicebot as if it is not random. Trust me, we've been over this a million times – it's random!!!
- If the worst happens and your opponent needs to bow out of a game due to life constraints, except his decision gracefully. I mean, c'mon, it's a game for crying out loud. Likewise, if you need to bow out don't string your opponent along because you feel guilty. Be a man and fess up early and get on with life. He'll understand, trust me.

Conclusion

If the above looks daunting remember that when you are actually playing the scenario, the funny mechanics become second nature. Often you end up *really getting into the scenario*. This is the best part of PBEM – I find I typically become more engrossed in my email games than I do my FTF games! Because you have more time to think about the scenario, your strategies tend to coalesce more. Plus you have plenty of time to look up those funky rules sections, so you can play scenarios that you normally wouldn't play FTF.

I highly recommend playing by email on VASL if you haven't tried it yet. If anybody needs help installing VASL, or getting a PBEM game going, drop me a note at matt.romey@terumomedical.com. Till then, roll low. For *your* units, that is, not for your opponent's!

For Matt's great example of a VASL Board and a series of log files, just turn the page! -ed.



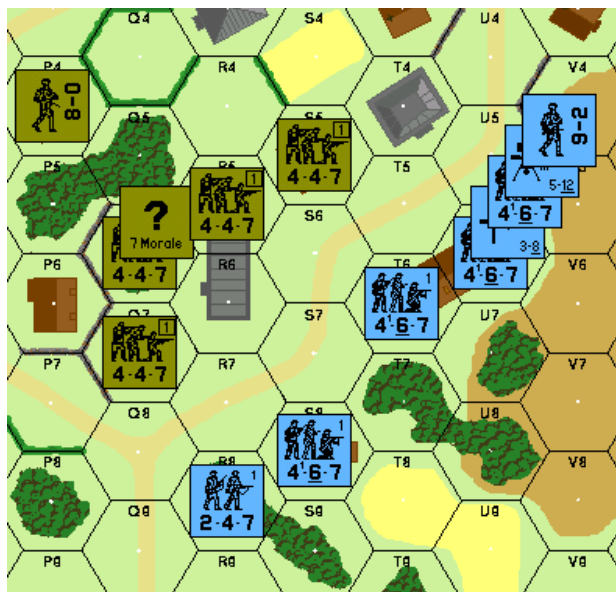
Words That Echo...

"They told us we had to hold and by God,
we held."

Major Willie Jones, USMC, Betio, Tarawa, D+2.

Sample VASL Board

By Matt Romey



Sample Log Files

Note:

Ivan is Russian and his logs are in **red**.
Jerry is German and his logs are in **blue**.

"PBEM - RPh-MPh1.log"

<Jerry> - Hey Ivan,
<Jerry> - How was your weekend. I'm still recovering - ough.
<Jerry> - Ok, it's the start of my turn. RPh, WC
*** DR = 3,6 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - NE.
<Jerry> - I have no other RPh activities.
<Jerry> - PPh:
<Jerry> - U6 vs. R5. 16+1
*** DR = 4,3 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - IMC.
<Jerry> - 447 takes IMC:
*** DR = 6,3 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - Fail. Broken/DM
<Jerry> - That's it for Prep. Movement.
<Jerry> - (Please stop and send the log back to me if you pin or break anyone, or if I move into residual firepower)
<Jerry> - First: dash to R6
* R8: 2-4-7 moves R7 *
<Jerry> - 1
* R7: 2-4-7 moves R6 *
<Jerry> - 3
<Jerry> - Next: dash to R6
* T6: 4-6-7 moves S7 *
<Jerry> - 1
* S7: 4-6-7 moves R6 *
<Jerry> - 3
<Jerry> - next
<Jerry> - dash to R6
* S8: 4-6-7 moves S7 *
<Jerry> - 1
* S7: 4-6-7 moves R6 *
<Jerry> - 3
<Jerry> - Ok, let's see what happens.
<Jerry> - Jerry

Ivan interrupts

"PBEM - DFF1.log"

<Ivan> - Jerry,
<Ivan> - Your 247 just dashed into R7.
<Ivan> - I'll fire from Q7. 4-2
*** DR = 4,3 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - IMC
*** DR = 1,3 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - Pass. 2 rfp.
<Ivan> - ok, continuing the logfile...
* R7: 2-4-7 moves R6 *
<Jerry> - 3
<Jerry> - Next: dash to R6
* T6: 4-6-7 moves S7 *
<Jerry> - 1
* S7: 4-6-7 moves R6 *
<Ivan> - I'll fire at S7 from S5. 2-2
*** DR = 2,4 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - IMC
<Ivan> - 467 takes IMC
*** DR = 1,2 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - Pass. Dang. Continuing...
* R7: 2 FP splits into S7 *
<Jerry> - 3
<Jerry> - next
<Jerry> - dash to R6
* S8: 4-6-7 moves S7 *
<Ivan> - Ok, you just entered rfp, so I'll kick this back to you.
<Ivan> - Ivan

"PBEM - MPh2.log"

<Jerry> - Ivan, nice shooting.... NOT!
<Jerry> - Ok, I'll move my last unit in S8. He never entered the resid in S7, so I'll move him starting from S8 now.
* S8: 4-6-7 moves R7/R8 *
<Jerry> - 1
* R7/R8: 4-6-7 moves Q8 *
<Jerry> - 2
<Jerry> - That's it. Over to you for DFPh.
<Jerry> - Jerry.

Ivan interrupts

"PBEM - DFF2.log"

<Ivan> - Jerry,
<Ivan> - Your last unit just entered Q8. I'll FPF from Q7.
<Ivan> - 4-2
*** DR = 2,6 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - NMC and broken for me.
<Ivan> - NMC on your 467.
*** DR = 3,5 *** <Ivan>
<Ivan> - Fail. Broken/DM.
<Ivan> - I have no more Defensive Fire.
<Ivan> - Ivan.

"PBEM - AFPh-CCPh.log"

<Jerry> - Ivan, here is my AFPh:
<Jerry> - 467,247 in R6 vs. S5. 3+2.
*** DR = 4,3 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - NE.
<Jerry> - RPh. Me first.
* Q8: DM,broken 4-6-7 moves R8 *
<Jerry> - 2
<Jerry> - Yours are next. I'll let you do them in your RPh, as wherever your guys go will not effect my Advances.
<Jerry> - Ok, APh.
* R6: 4-6-7,2-4-7 moves Q6 *
<Jerry> - That's it. CCPh.
<Jerry> - Ambush roll in Q6. I'm +0, you are -2 for Concealment. Me then you:
*** dr = 1 *** <Jerry>
*** dr = 6 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - I Ambush you!!!
<Jerry> - Ok, revealing your unit, it's a 447. I'll go 3:2 vs him, -1 DRM.
*** DR = 6,4 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - Nope. Now you. 1:2, +1.
*** DR = 2,5 *** <Jerry>
<Jerry> - NE. Melee.
<Jerry> - No ? gain for me. Your turn. I have no activities in your RPh.
<Jerry> - Jerry.

ASL Challenge! A Word Find By Rob Stai

There are 38 ASL words in the grid. Can you find them all then unscramble the unused letters for the 39th word? **Answers on Page 13.**

R	E	T	S	I	N	A	C	I	R	E	M	A	I	B
M	O	L	O	T	O	V	T	E	C	K	C	O	H	S
D	E	R	O	M	R	A	S	N	S	Q	O	A	J	E
C	K	O	G	M	L	I	A	U	U	M	T	A	S	E
I	O	U	M	I	D	V	R	I	Y	T	P	E	D	C
T	M	T	A	U	D	O	R	R	A	A	N	E	O	N
A	S	N	A	A	H	E	E	C	N	I	D	W	U	K
N	D	L	P	P	D	L	K	E	H	N	E	R	I	R
A	P	E	S	A	L	E	S	C	U	R	R	H	U	E
F	A	O	F	I	R	E	P	O	W	E	R	S	B	S
W	H	I	T	E	I	T	W	Z	V	P	S	I	R	R
P	O	R	E	H	N	F	I	O	L	I	R	N	O	E
N	A	M	R	E	G	D	T	S	A	N	C	N	K	B
C	O	N	C	E	A	L	E	N	A	S	P	I	E	I
B	R	I	T	I	S	H	Y	R	T	N	A	F	N	I

Moments in History: Unknown Weapons of the U.S.M.C.

By Scott Thompson



When the United States entered World War II, it was woefully unprepared for the rapid expansion of its Armed Forces. We have all learned about how the might of American industry was transformed for war. Ford made Shermans, Goodyear made Corsairs and even IBM and Rockola (jukeboxes) made M1 Carbines. This feat of industrial might turned the tables on the Axis powers by overwhelming them with the quantities of material produced. Remember the quote by a German tanker regarding the Sherman tank: "Our panzers were worth 9 of the American panzers, but they always had 10."

This monumental achievement did not happen overnight. The beginning of 1942 saw the rapid expansion of all branches of the US armed forces, including the USMC. The Marines have always been a very small organization, and yes, actually a part of the US Navy. The Marine Corps ground forces numbered less than a division in 1941 but would grow to 6 divisions by VJ Day. This growth, coupled with the delays in production while industry switched over to war production, meant that weapons were in short supply for the Marines in 1942.

The Johnson Rifle

The US Army had adopted the M1 rifle for service in 1936. The Marine Corps participated in the trials for the M1 rifle and also adopted it for service in late 1941. The US military has a definite hierarchy, and the Marines are the unwanted stepchildren. This, unfortunately, translated into virtually 100% of the early M1 production being earmarked for the Army, so the Marines began to look elsewhere for weapons to arm their new formations. In their search for available weapons, the Marine Corps took a second look at some weapons that had been submitted for trials to the Government but were not adopted.

The Marines in 1942 were desperate for a semi-auto rifle with which to arm their units. One rifle that had competed against the M1 was a rifle designed by a Marine Corps Reserve Lieutenant named Melvin Johnson. Lt. Johnson had been assigned by the Marine Corps to the Springfield Armory as an observer during the development of the Garand rifle and its competitor the Pedersen rifle, and asked to evaluate both. Johnson reported that both rifles had inherent design flaws that would prevent them from being efficiently massed produced (guess he was wrong about the Garand!). In 1935 he began to design a semi-automatic rifle of his own, and after much fine tuning, submitted his design for evaluation by the government in 1940. The Army dubbed it to be "not materially superior to the M1" and the Marine Corps placed it second behind the M1 but ahead

of the design submitted by Winchester. The American entry into World War II caused the Marine Corps to once again look at the Johnson rifle.

The Johnson rifle shared similarities with the M1. It fired a .30 caliber round, was capable of semi-automatic fire and was roughly the same weight and length. But that is where the similarities end. One of the design flaws of the M1 was that it used an internal stripper clip of 8 rounds that could only be reloaded when the last round had been fired and the stripper was ejected. (I've read accounts of German soldiers waiting behind cover until they heard the familiar "pling" of an M1 stripper clip being ejected.) The Johnson rifle utilized an internal 10 round rotary magazine (giving it a pot-bellied look) that could be loaded from a closed bolt position either from 5 round clips or individually. The rotary design meant that the magazine could be "topped off" at any time. It also utilized recoil operation rather than the gas piston system found in the M1, which had the unusual feature of having the barrel of the rifle move back and forth with each shot. The Johnson rifle had excellent accuracy due to having eight locking lugs on the bolt and a straight-line stock. Lastly, the barrel could be quickly removed via a lever at the fore end of the stock. This feature in particular caught the interest of the newly forming ParaMarines and Raider units because the removable barrel allowed it to be stowed in a small canvas bag when jumping.

Luckily for the Marine Corps, Johnson had made 70,000 rifles for the Dutch government, but only a few had been delivered to the Dutch East Indies before the Japanese onslaught forced the remainder to sit in a warehouse in Rhode Island. Here the Marines had a semi-auto rifle that they could get their hands on. They purchased the rifles and began to issue them to Marines of the 1st Parachute Battalion and 4th Raider Battalion. The ParaMarines used the Johnson rifle during the Solomon Islands campaign, and the Raiders used them during the New Georgia operation. Eventually, enough M1s began to roll off the production line that the Marines were able to equip all of their units with M1s and the Johnsons (as well as '03 Springfields and '17 Enfields) were removed from service.

Johnson Rifle



M1941 Johnson rifle with attached bayonet. The Johnson was used in limited numbers by several U.S. Marine units during WWII.

(Continued on page 8)

(President's Corner, Continued from page 1)

sions. The fighting is very close, high FP, high TEM and it gets intense. Another aspect of the game that all the players agree as being very cool, is the block control mechanic. It forces the attacker to set clear tactical goals and employ sound tactics to achieve them. Of course just killing the other side is always a sound tactic. The ammo and water shortage that the British suffer really adds to the feeling of desperation. For those of you that still doubt, saying that nothing could equal the sheer carnage of Red Barricades, take a look at our last dates CVP totals: 134 points of German casualties to 63 British casualties. After all that carnage neither side could decide which side was the better off. So the next time you prepare to embark on the commitment of a campaign game, you might give this one a try.

I'll see you in August!

Ordnance Quiz Answers!

1. No. The DEFENDER must be non-concealed. **(C2.2401)**
2. No. No. A Gun using IFE cannot lay a Fire Lane or make a Snap Shot. **(C2.29)**
3. Mortars, AA Guns and Guns capable of using AA fire. **(C2.6)**
4. Infantry Target Type. **(C3.31)**
5. None. This effect is factored into their Basic TK# and Range modifiers. **(C3.7)**
6. 40mm. **(C3.8)**
7. The Case E DRM is doubled if the firer is in a woods/building/rubble hex (unless in Bypass). **(C5.5)**
8. Acquisition DRM are not applicable to a Deliberate Immobilization attempt. However, Acquisition can be gained while attempting such a shot in case the firer subsequently fires on the target normally. **(C5.7)**
9. A target cannot be acquired (or Acquisition maintained) by firing SMOKE. However, an existing Acquisition DRM can be used normally to attempt to place SMOKE in the hex. **(C6.56)**
10. Yes. However, acquisition is gained only if the shot causes the loss of that concealment. **(C6.57)**



The Johnson LMG

At the same time he was developing his rifle, Melvin Johnson also developed a light machine gun version, though it was classified as an automatic rifle due to its detachable 20 round magazines. The Johnson LMG used many of the same features and parts as the rifle, such as the same short-recoil operation and the same receivers. This LMG also fired the standard .30-06 M2 cartridges as the Johnson and M1 rifles. The LMG was capable of both semi-automatic (from the closed bolt) and automatic (from the open bolt) fire, and the cyclic rate of fire could be adjusted from 300 to 900 rounds per minute. The LMG measured 42" long with a 22" barrel and utilized a straight-line recoil to reduce muzzle rise that necessitated a high front sight, and the rear sight was capable of fine adjustments which could be folded down when not in use. The LMG also featured a folding bipod and sling swivels.

The Johnson light machine gun had several design features that were superior to the BAR. The Johnson LMG, like the rifle, featured a quick-change barrel, which allowed extra barrels to be carried, enabling the gunner to greatly increase sustained fire over that of the BAR. The Johnson LMG weighed only 12.3 pounds empty versus the 19 pound BAR. The 20-round magazine fed from the left side of the LMG, and like the rifle, could be topped off without removing the magazine by inserting individual rounds through the ejection port on the right side. One of the biggest advantages was that Johnson designed the feed lips that guide each round into the chamber to be a part of the receiver itself, rather than part of the magazine. This meant that the feed lips were constructed of solid steel and not subject to deformation and subsequent misfeeding problems that other detachable magazine weapons were.

In early 1942 the Marine Corps was facing the same problem procuring BARs that they had obtaining M1's. This lack of availability forced the Marines to look elsewhere for an automatic rifle/LMG. They evaluated the Johnson LMG and found it to have a number of good features, so they authorized it to be used as a supplement to the BAR (but not replacing it). Again, the removable barrel made the weapon ideally suited to airborne use, and the Marine Corps issued them to ParaMarine and Raider units. It has also been reported that the First Special Service Force ("Devil's Brigade") and OSS units operating in Europe, and rumored to have been used by some Army Ranger units. I read a report that stated that the "Devil's Brigade" obtained 147 Johnson LMGs from a Marine Raider unit in trade for some of the new R5 explosive compound.

As BARs became more readily available to the Marine Corps the Johnson LMGs were removed from service. Generally, they were well regarded by the units that used them, but the lack of standard accoutrements made their use in combat less than favorable. For instance, because there was no ammunition carriers produced for the Johnson LMG, gunners were forced to try to use BAR ammo carriers. The BAR magazine was a straight 20-round magazine, while the Johnson used a curved 20-round magazine, which did not fit very well into the ammo carrier.

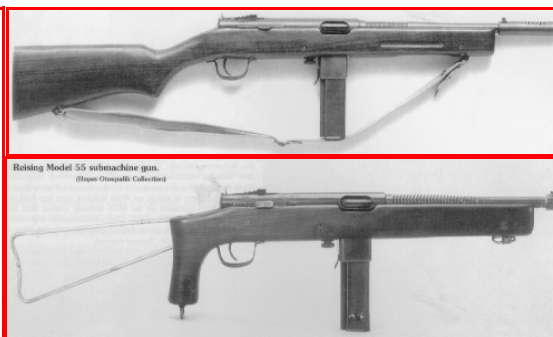
Johnson LMG



The Reising SMG

Another interesting weapon used early in the war by the Marines was the Model 50 Reising submachine gun. (A folding stock version,

Reising SMG



the Model 55, was also used.) It was developed by Eugene G. Reising, who had worked with John Browning's design team on the M1911 .45 pistol and several other firearm manufacturers. At the beginning of WWII, Reising realized that there would be an increased demand for submachine guns. His submachine gun was designed to fire, unlike all other submachine guns at the time, from the closed bolt position. This made his submachine gun inherently more accurate, but was at risk of quicker overheating.

As in the two previous examples, the Marines had adopted the M1928A1 Thompson (no relation unfortunately) as its standard submachine gun, but were unable to procure them in sufficient numbers. Once again, the Marines looked elsewhere to fulfill their needs and, after evaluating it, found that it could be used as a supplement until such a time that Thompsons could be procured.

The Reising fired a standard .45 pistol cartridge at a rate of approximately 450 rounds per minute, only slightly slower than the military version of the Thompson. It had one major advantage in that it had an unloaded weight of a mere 6.75 pounds as compared to the 11-pound Thompson. The Model 50 Reising measured 35.75" long (Model 55 was 31.25" unfolded and 22.25" folded), and featured a compensator on the end of the barrel (deleted on the Model 55) and cooling fins on the barrel near the receiver. Magazines came in 20-round and 12-round capacities, but the 20-round appears to have been the more common one.

The Model 50 was issued to various units in early 1942, and the Model 55 was issued to ParaMarines. When the 1st Marine Division landed on Guadalcanal in August of that year, Reising's were found in just about all of the units in the division. It was at that time, under the rigors of combat conditions, that mechanical reliability problems began to appear. It seems that as long as the weapons were kept clean and oiled they functioned fine, but under the grime and neglect of combat they began to fail the Marines. This led to their earning a reputation as a piece of junk. It has even been reported that Lt. Col. Merritt Edson ordered a large number of Reising's to be thrown in the Lunga River rather than be issued to his troops. I have also read reports of Marines throwing their Reising's away because they viewed them so negatively. When Army troops began to arrive on Guadalcanal, Marines being Marines, they began to "borrow" Thompsons from the Army supply depots and troops to replace their Reising's.

Again, as supplies of the Thompson submachine gun became available, the remaining Reising's were withdrawn from service. They did not serve very long and their combat record was very dismal. Aside from the lighter weight of the Reising, it would seem that it was a failure as a submachine gun.



Lt. Melvin Johnson

I hope that you enjoyed this tour of some of the little known weapons that served the United States Marine Corps in World War II. While this article may not be of much value to ASL at first glance, I hope that it may be of some use to the scenario designers out there.

Semper Par

The Pastor's Corner: "Spicing Up the Game, Part III"

by Robert Hammond

Robert's final installment of "Spice" presents rules variations for Ordnance and Vehicles. Robert promised he'd keep the Spice list to 30 suggestions...of course, I hadn't counted on true ASL rules numbering in 27-30! -ed.

27. Artillery Crews. Any (temporary) crew of an ART Gun may not fire in the Direct roll until such crew passes a NTC. All Artillery crews were trained to fire in the Indirect roll [EXC: USMC ART crews were trained to fire in the Direct roll and as such are exempt from this NTC.]. Attempting the NTC is not a Concealment Loss activity and SAN is NA. Failure of the NTC does not prevent the crew from attempting other functions.

28. Vehicular Road Facing. Why is it, vehicles travel down the road at about a 30 degree facing? Vehicles should travel "facing" the road. As for any TH attempts against the vehicle, yes, the side facing will garner more TH but that's life. Also, allow a change in VCA from a hexspine to a hexside, in which both hexspines are within the Front VCA, as 0 MP per new hex entered.

29. TH Process and Location.

29.1. Multiple Hits. If a weapon qualifies for possible multiple hits, any TH roll of 7 becomes Multiple Hits (replaces doubles). The cdr (red if you use my 3 die system) determines whether it is a turret (cdr 1-2) or lower hull (cdr 3-6) hit. {Thanks Dave R.}

29.2. Track Hits. A TH DR of doubles is a track hit [EXC: TH DR of 2 or 12.]. Use weakest AF (minimum AF of 0). HE receives a -1

nario "Shooting Fools!"

29.4. Auto Miss. Any TH DR of 12 is always a miss.

29.5. Possible Breakdown. Any time a TH DR of the *current* B# is thrown [EXC: Those with either a circled B# or marked with Low Ammo, MG], make a subsequent dr. On a dr of 1, Missed; dr of 2-3, marked with a "No Fire" counter; dr of 4, out of that type of Ammo; dr of 5-6, weapon is malfunctioned.

29.6. Repair attempts. Any weapon that is malfunctioned, an attempt must be made to repair the weapon. I would also allow the crew to attempt a repair during a fire phase with an "all or nothing" approach. The weapon is fixed with a repair dr <= the normal repair number. Fail this repair attempt and the weapon is disabled. Now, are you going to charge the "ugly" after he could pull out another repair attempt? {Thanks MLR}

29.7. AFV PFF IF. I would allow an AFV to continue to fire its MA after an IF shot. If an AFV is not allowed IF, this would still apply. For each such shot taken, lower the B# and X# by one. Either if the crew fails its MC and/or disable the MA, the crew bails out under Recall. A TH DR of 12 would destroy the AFV and eliminate the crew. I would restrict the PFF IF shot so as not to be able to fire at a target further away than the last PFF IF shot unless the previous target was destroyed. {Thanks MLR}

29.8. Deliberate Immobilization. As it is now, it is too difficult and subsequently hardly ever used. If you read the Chapter H Russian Vehicle Notes on the KV-1 M39, you are left with the impression that German tank commanders were successful in immobilizing these giants. My

29.11. Movement Modifiers.

29.11a. Speed TH Chart. No matter how fast or slow a vehicle is going, the TH modifier is always +2. Which is easier to hit? A French tank that expends all of its 5 MP in one location or a Jeep with 37 MP that only used a ½ MP to enter a location via a paved road? Have the TH modification be based on a simple percentage of how much MP were spent in a location. I would start at +5 if a vehicle spent <= 20% of its printed MP in a location. The TH modifier would decrease by 1 for every additional 20% (FRU) of its printed MP it uses in a location. Unarmored vehicles would receive the TH modifier as a DRM on the IFT FP column.

So, the French tank that expends all 5 MP in a location qualifies for a +1 TH modifier; the jeep would qualify for a +5 TH modifier. Now, James Caan should be able to drive the jeep through the enemy, get his wounded Captain to the doctor at the field hospital, and then have a 10 second courts-martial. For those of you that want to try this, below is a "Speed TH Chart" that would replace the normal TH of +2. {Thanks MLR}

29.11b. Limited LOS. Finally, I would mark a vehicle that ended its movement in Motion with a Limited LOS counter. This would get rid of the "Time Freeze" that happens to vehicles. This limited LOS would only apply to an enemy unit firing in the PFFh that would have been subject to the Limited LOS modifier had the enemy fired during the previous MP or DFPh. The counter is removed at the beginning of the next friendly movement.

Speed TH Chart	MP	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
	+5	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	
	+4	2	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9	9	10	10	10	11	11	12	12	12	13	13	14	14	14	15	15
	+3	3	4	5	5	6	6	7	8	8	9	9	10	11	11	12	12	13	14	14	15	15	16	17	17	18	18	19	20	20	21	21	22	23
	+2	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30

bonus to the Track TK #. A Track TK DR <= the Track AF and the AFV is unable to turn in that direction. If the Track TK DR <= half of the Track AF, AFV is Immobilized. Now, you can repeat history and have a PF blow off the tracks of a Crocodile just like the HOB scenario "Tank has to go!" {Thanks Dave R.}

29.3. Weapon Hits. A TH DR of the maximum # needed to hit results in a weapon being hit (MA, SA, MG, FT, flail, bridging, sD, sM, sN, sP) [EXC: A TH # of <= 2 requires an additional dr of 6.]. The cdr (red if you use my 3 die system) determines whether it is a turret (cdr 1-2) or lower hull (cdr 3-6) hit. Random selection picks the weapon(s) involved even if already disabled. Use weakest AF (minimum AF of 0). HE would receive a -1 bonus to the Weapon TK#. A Weapon TK DR <= the Weapons AF and the weapon is malfunctioned. If the Weapon TK DR <= half of the Weapon AF, the weapon is disabled. An AFV MA disabled this way and the crew may accept Recall. Now you can repeat history and have a Sherman fire an AP round and blow off the main gun of a Panther just like the TOT sce-

thought is, this is done while *outmaneuvering* this giant. In reality, sure; in the game, never. If you change the DI penalty for a *stationary* target to +3 through the front target VCA or +2 through the side/rear target VCA, more attempts would be made. (Humm, just like in the real war.) Add to this a +1 for the use of a HE round for every 50mm of the HE round (FRU) and you have HE rounds now being used to immobilize tanks! {Thanks MLR}

29.9. Critical Hit Locations. A TH DR of 2 (that would normally be a CH) requires a subsequent dr. On a dr of 1, the Critical Hit is resolved against the Aerial AF; 2, a weapon is destroyed; 3, turret; dr of 4-5, lower hull; dr of 6, track. Use weakest AF (minimum AF of 0) for the tracks. If HD, a dr of 4-6 is a miss.

29.10. Armor Leader CH. Any AL with a -1 modifier will CH an AFV with a TH DR of <= 3 at a range of 1-6. Any AL with a -2 modifier will CH an AFV with a TH DR of <= 4 [EXC: doubles.] at a range of 1-6. Tanks crews were trained in aiming and hitting certain parts of an enemy tank. You want to showcase a historical tank commander, now you can.

30. TK Variables.

30.1. TK DR of 11. Any TK DR of 11 would result in a "lowering" of the effects by one. If the result should be a Burning Wreck, it becomes a Wreck. If a Wreck, it becomes a Shock (turret) or Immobilization (lower hull). If a Shock / Immobilization, it becomes a P. Shock. If P. Shock, it becomes No Effect. This just allows a possible survival if a ht or some other lightly armored vehicle is hit with a PF.

30.2. Slow Burn. Any vehicle that is turned into a Burning Wreck with exactly the number to do so, is considered a Slow Burning Wreck. A vehicle with a red CS number, becomes a Slow Burning Wreck with a TK DR equal to or 1 greater than half the final TK number. The vehicle becomes a Burning Wreck but CS/cs is still allowed. I've read too many stories of guys getting out of burning wrecks.

30.3. Shock / UK. Modify the back of the UK counter as follows:

1-3: ok; 4: rs survival; 5: rs elim; 6 Elim ("rs" means random selection for tank, crew, PRC.)

(Continued on page 10)

30.4. Exploding Tanks. Any AFV with a turret, whether the turret is movable or not, suffers an explosion if the Final TK DR is $\leq \frac{1}{4}$ of the TK number or has become a burning wreck and there was a 1 on the cdr. If there is an explosion, the turret is knocked off in the current Location on a lower hull hit or knocked off into an ADJACENT Location on a turret hit. Make a dr to see which ADJACENT Location the turret lands in.

After determining which Location the turret lands in, all units in that Location are attacked with a subsequent DR on the IFT equal to the Area FP of the MA (SAN is NA). If the color dr of this "turret" attack is a 1, a flame is created if the Location contains burnable terrain. Just remember, when Tiger Ace Wittman was killed, his Tiger tank's turret was blown off!

30.5. Drivers and Lower Hull Hits. I would change a TK attempt verses a lower hull that results in an immobilization to a NMC (modified Shock) of the driver. Fail this MC and the vehicle can not move. If in motion, you make a random facing dr to determine the possible new VCA and the vehicle then moves in that direction using the rest of its MP for that move or until it runs into some terrain. The vehicle stops at the conclusion of this movement. If the vehicle drives off a cliff, the vehicle is destroyed and removed from play. If the MC results in a casualty MC, the "driver" is temporarily disabled and the vehicle stays in hex and pivots clockwise until all remaining MP are used at which point it stops. The vehicle can move again next MPH. While the vehicle is moving, it must make a bog check for every new hex that the vehicle enters or hexspine that the vehicle changes.

30.6. Compartmentalized Damages. Any TK that is $1 <$ the final TK # does not wreck the vehicle. Instead, it causes just part of the vehicle to be damaged.

If a Lower Hull hit, it results in random selection of the following: 1) Can not move in one direction (Left, Right, Forward, Backwards); 2) Speed is half (FRD); 3) Black MP become Red MP; 4) Suffer from Fuel Shortage or if under Fuel Shortage you run out of gas; 4) No road rate; 5) Immobilization; 6) Random selection of hull weapons destroyed. If the result is NA, re-roll.

If a Turret or Upper Hull hit, it results in random selection of the following: 1) Turret can not turn in one direction; 2) Turret can not fire at a different level target (Higher, Lower); 3) Turret can only turn one hexspine per player turn and is treated as a NT for the turn; 4) Gyro destroyed; 5) T type turret becomes ST or ST type turret becomes NT; 6) Can not fire a random weapon while BU; 7) +1 to all attacks and no fire at ranges ≥ 13 hexes; 8) Random selection of turret weapons destroyed; 9) AL is wounded; roll wound dr. If failed, vehicle is under Recall. If the result is NA, re-roll. By using this, you can have a Sherman limp along as in the scenario "Lash Out." {Thanks KJ}

30.7. HEAT TH Table. (See inserts below.) The game always allows a HEAT round to strike with full power. In reality, this almost never happens. The reason I know this, I'm a former Marine Combat Engineer and I dealt with these silly SCW. The HEAT round is dependent on how well it "faces" on to the target or how flat it smashes up against the target. Even then, the "Monroe Effect" (this is what gives a HEAT round its tremendous armor punch or drilling effect) may not work as well as intended. The charge may only partially explode, the charge may not be fully flat against the surface of the target, the weapon might be damaged on impact right before the Monroe Effect can fully take effect, etc.

The gents at KE came up with a *fantastic and realistic* table for determining the variable *Basic TK number* of a HEAT round, whether fired from Ordnance or a LATW (BAZ, PF, etc.) with a subsequent dr. If you have access to it, it should be used. If you don't have it, you will have to wait until a Korean module comes out. I do not feel I have the liberty to publish these charts.

However, I would have a sliding scale. Here are a few of the more common HEAT rounds. Make a subsequent dr, non-leader modified, to determine the *Basic TK #*. A CH would double the *Basic TK number* with no subsequent dr.

Subsequent dr	BAZ 43	BAZ 44 BAZ 45	PIAT	PSK	PF	105
≤ 1	13	16	15	26	31	15
2	11	14	14	23	28	13
3	10	13	12	20	24	11
4	8	11	11	18	21	9
5	7	10	9	15	18	8
6	6	8	7	13	15	7

The Subsequent dr is modified by:

- 1 for (inherent) SW firing in hex,
- 1 for firing at a stopped / bog / mired / immobilized AFV
- 1 for any $\frac{1}{2}$ " Target Acquisition
- +1 for Inexperienced
- +1 for any supplemental armor
- +1 for Mist / Fog / Rain / Falling Snow

30.8. AFV Crew Suppression. How come we read about tanks crews being driven from their tanks with HE rounds? Can't do it in the game! Try this. When a HE round, whether direct or indirect, hits an AFV but doesn't destroy / Immobilize the AFV or Shock the crew, use the same TK number on the IFT and have the AFV crew take a MC using their ML with any AL bonus. The AFV crew receives a +2 modifier on the IFT DR for being BU in a AFV against Indirect Fire. Fail the HE MC and the crew is Pinned and mark the vehicle with a Pin counter. If Pinned and fail the MC, they become Broken and mark the vehicle with a DM counter. If Broken and they fail the MC, they immediately Bail-Out in good order. A Pin or DM counter is removed at the end of the current player turn and has no other effect on the AFV crew. Now, you have a chance to drive out an AFV crew with HE rounds, just like you read in the war books.

[EX: A 50* MTR fires on a tank and hits. The IFT DR on the 2 FP column is a 4. This results in no effect against the tank and doesn't Shock the crew. However, on the IFT, this is a 1MC but, because of the +2 for being BU in an AFV, this becomes a PTC so the crew does not have to take any MC. The same mortar fires again and scores a Critical Hit and the IFT DR is a 5 which results in no effect against the tank and doesn't Shock the crew. This time, the IFT DR of 5 becomes a 7 which results in a 1MC. The AFV crew fail the 1MC and are Pinned. A 50mm Gun direct fires with HE against the same AFV. The HE round doesn't effect the tank and doesn't Shock the crew. However, the TK DR was a 7. As this is Direct Fire, the +2 for being BU in an AFV is NOT in effect so this results in a NMC on the IFT. The AFV crew fail the NMC and now become Broken.]



Robert "got DYO?" Hammond

Well, that's all for now. I've thrown thirty DYO rules at you over the past three newsletters and I hope you have fun with them. Now, what did I do with my charts on AFV MA Gun elevations?

HTB! 10 and 11 Scenario Design Notes By Bruce Kirkaldy

Bruce is our featured scenario designer this newsletter and he has a pair of winners here! I asked if he would give us the inside scoop on these two to help lure a few more of you into a playtest or two! —ed.

HTB! 10: Rotes Rathaus

I originally got the idea for "Rotes Rathaus" over five years ago, while doing research for a Berlin HASL idea I was putting around with. It was during this time that I met Eddie Zeman and found that he was already underway with HOB's Berlin HASL, "Berlin: Red Vengeance." Eddie invited me to contribute a couple of scenario designs for inclusion in B:RV. I submitted two scenarios, one of which actually made it into the module, though with some significant (but needed) changes, as "Polish Prize." The other scenario was the initial version of Rotes Rathaus. This early version of the scenario was not quite ready for prime time, however.

One of the images from the original action that sparked my imagination was the fact that the Russian assault teams had to breach the walls of the Town Hall with demolition charges from the cover of an adjacent building. At that time there was no city board available which had the correct arrangement of buildings to set up this possibility. Even using overlays was not completely satisfactory. In addition to this problem, it was not possible for me to determine the exact make-up of the German force. Did they have any ordnance supporting the defense? AFVs? None of my sources were that specific, though the composition of the Russian force was easier to approximate. Consequently, the scenario was still lacking the right feel, and Eddie decided not to use it.

Then came two events that would inspire a new approach to depicting the action. The first was the release of board 45. Building Y4 looked to be a good candidate for the "Rathaus," because of its size and also because it had an adjacent building; offering the possibility for a "historical" approach to assaulting the structure. The second was the release of HOB's MIB packs, which included a scenario named "Tough Luck." This is a nifty little scenario that features a semi-DYO approach. This is just the kind of design approach that works well in a situation where the designer may not know the exact make-up of the

forces involved, but does have enough information to deduce what *could* have been there. This design approach kills two birds with one stone. It removes the "historical monkey" from the back of the designer and also provides the players with the ability to tailor their forces to their own particular game strategies.

Having established which board was to be used and which building was to represent the "Rathaus," the next steps were determining the "scenario-given" forces and constructing the Reinforcement Group (RG) tables for both sides. The Russian RG Table was fairly easy to construct, as one of my sources included a good account of the action by Marshall Zhukov. In Berlin, the Russians used small assault groups, usually composed of twenty to thirty men; supported by one tank or SP gun. Often, these groups were augmented with flame-throwers and/or demo charges. I designed the Russian "Assault Group" RGs along these lines, providing different combinations of various AFVs, FTs, and DCs. In addition, some low cost "sundry" units were added to the RG table for the expenditure of any left over Purchase Points.

Despite having lots of cool toys in his arsenal, the Russian player has to choose his RGs wisely. The German player may "pull a Tiger out of his hat," in which case, the Russian player might like to have one or more IS-2ms in his OOB. But IS-2ms are expensive, allowing only three AFVs to be purchased. If the German doesn't purchase the Tiger RG, then that fourth AFV might be missed.

Coming up with the German RG Table was a little more challenging than that for the Russians. In constructing the table, I wanted to put the German player in the position of having to make some tough choices... there were no "easy choices" for the German commanders in Berlin. I designed the tables to make it fairly impossible for the German player to build a "comfortable" force. The German player does, however, have some interesting options. The aforementioned Tiger RG could be a spoiler if the Russian player neglects to buy any heavy armor. But this option is expensive, so the Tiger RG is by no means a given. Also, the Fortification RG, with its Wire and Roadblock, can also come in handy. Wire, in particular, can be useful to channel the Russian infantry or slow down a Human Wave attack.

SSRs reflect the defensibility of the Rathaus (all Ground Level locations are Fortified) and the desperate state of the defenders (Fanatic if in the Rathaus), as well as German ammunition, PF, and fuel shortages.

Overall, I'm happy with the way this scenario has evolved. Both players have some good options and, despite the desperate situation for the defenders, this will not necessarily be a walk in the park for the Russians. The Russian player has a strong force, but he'll have to use all of his assets to their best potential in order to drive the fanatic SS out of the Rathaus. I hope you will take the opportunity to give it a try. If so, don't forget to send an AAR!



Bruce "got Armor?" Kirkaldy

HTB! 11: Breakout from Borisov

An "official" ASL update of the classic Squad Leader scenario, "Breakout From Borisov" has yet to be released by MMP. I find this curious, because the scenario has tremendous appeal. To the Barbarossa aficionado (isn't that just about all of us?), this scenario has it all...hordes of Russian infantry, cavalry, tin cans and "super tanks" go toe to toe with a 1941 German combined arms spearhead; complete with Assault Engineers, OBA, and Stukas. It's a gigantic meeting engagement, where much of the action takes place in the venerable old Board 3 village.

I based this unofficial update on the original Squad Leader scenario, with very few changes. One of the changes I did make was inspired by an earlier update that was available on the internet several years ago. I originally started out to improve this internet version, but couldn't locate the original designer (or re-designer). The earlier version had some significant problems, so the only thing that I borrowed from that version was the SSR allowing the German mortar half-tracks to be directed by radio. I liked this rule and it does add an extra dimension to the game.

Russian advantages can be summed up in one word: Numbers! 54 squads, including six cavalry squads, and 11 AFVs will give the Russian player plenty to intimidate his German opponent with. But the Russian force is brittle. With an ELR of 2, there may soon be a lot of disrupted Russian Conscripts on the map. Also, many of the Russian tanks have an Armor Factor of 2 or less, meaning they won't stand up well in a sustained gun duel with most of the German tanks types. The BT tanks, in particular, are fast, with a good gun, but vulnerable to even MG fire. Then there are the "super tanks," the T-34, KV-I, and KV-II. Not much need be said about these behemoths...they're dangerous to German armor and infantry alike!

The German force is smaller than the Russian's, but has some unique properties which the German player will have to use to his best advantage in order to overcome the Russian numerical superiority. The German force is very mobile, which will help him to establish himself in the village before the bulk of the Russian infantry can arrive. Half of the 24 German squads are elite, with lots of support weapons and excellent leadership. He also has a fair share of tanks, some armed with 50mm MA. These are easily capable of dealing with the bulk of the Russian armor, but the T-34 and KVs will be another story. The German player should remember his Panzer IIIs' special ammo capability when facing these monsters. The German spearhead is also accompanied by a nice compliment of AT guns, including a 50L, which could be crucial for dealing with the Russian heavies. 100mm+ OBA and Stukas also help make up for Russian numbers.

Overall, the feel is very similar to the original Squad Leader version with one major exception... possibility of the Human Wave from Hell! This tends to be balanced out by multiple defensive fire possibilities, ROF and even FPF capability, especially with the high ratio of high morale elite units in the German OOB. With victory being determined by board control, the strategy for both sides will concentrate on position. The board 3 village, in particular, will tend to be the key to victory. At 10 turns, "Breakout From Borisov" can become a "way of life", but it is truly a rewarding and memorable ASL experience.

OUCH!



Rob Stai and Paul Simonsen squared off over The Liberators and managed to generate a rather respectable OUCH! —ed.

My attack started out nicely. By turn three, I already took the first bridge and was about to clean up the level 2 building on board 22. Unfortunately, I could not for the life of my Russians (literally) eliminate 1 German squad and a heroic 9-2 leader. They survived a 32 +5, and 3 28 +3 shots as well as numerous shots from 76L and 122L. In return, they eliminated 5 Russian squads, immobilized a sherman, and wounded/broke my OBA observer and put out of commission my 120mm OBA!

-Paul Simonsen



SoCal ASL Club

Challenge Cup Standings

July 24, 2001

Here are the rules for our Challenge Cup:

1. All club tournament games count [EXC: If the TD states otherwise BEFORE the scenario is played.].
2. All other play between members count unless both agreed against beforehand.
3. No limit on the total amount of games per calendar month.
4. You can play the same opponent only twice during the same calendar month [EXC: Tournament games.].
5. A minimum of 9 different opponents must be played.
6. A minimum of 11 games must be played with 1 of the games in a tournament format.*
7. Team play is ineligible.
8. Any questions or disagreements with standings, contact the Challenge Cup meister, preferably in writing.
9. There will be two categories, each with its own winner, to the Challenge Cup: "Gonzo" and "Finesse".***
10. The Challenge Cup period lasts from the beginning of WCM IV (Feb. 2, 2001) up to, but not including, WCM V.

* Enforced ONLY if two or more club sponsored/organized tournaments are ran during the Challenge Cup period.

** The "Gonzo" winner is determined by scoring the most points - five for each win, one for each loss, three each for a draw.

*** The "Finesse" winner is determined by how hard a record is to achieve using the following formula:

$$W! * L!$$

$$[(W/2+L/2)!]^2$$

W=Win L=Loss

The Gonzo and Finesse Winners each get the following awards....

- Free membership in the club for one year.
- Free attendance to one One-Day Tourney.
- Half-off their WCM tournament registration.

If the same person wins BOTH awards then that person will be awarded....

- Free membership in the club for one year.
- Free attendance to one One-Day Tourney.
- Half-off their WCM tournament registration.
- Free T-shirt for the WCM tournament.

If you have any questions about the Cup, please contact the Cupmeister, Matt Romey at:

ChallengeCup@socalasl.com

NOTE

Only Active Members are Listed in the Standings to the Right. Highlighted Members have qualified already.

Player Name	Wins	Losses	Draws	Gonzo Pts	Gonzo Rank	Finesse Pts	Finesse Rank
Matthew Cicero	10	3	0	53	1	6.15	2
Robert Feinstein	9	1	1	49	2	25.81	1
Bruce Kirkaldy	9	2	0	47	NA	8.58	NA
Ron Mosher	8	4	0	44	NA	1.86	NA
Bryan Earll	7	5	0	40	3	1.16	3
Herman Frettlöhr	7	1	0	36	NA	9.01	NA
Sheldon Ryland II	6	3	0	33	NA	1.56	NA
Scott Faulk	5	7	0	32	NA	-1.17	NA
Brandon Liesemeyer	5	5	0	30	NA	1	NA
Rich Mosher	4	10	0	30	4	-3.42	4
Dan Plachta	5	1	1	29	NA	3.46	NA
Cloyde Angell	5	2	0	27	NA	1.75	NA
Charles Hammond	4	5	0	25	NA	-1.06	NA
Fred Timm	4	4	0	24	NA	1	NA
Rob Stai	4	4	0	24	NA	1	NA
Bob Smith	4	3	0	23	NA	1.06	NA
Paul Simonsen	4	3	0	23	NA	1.06	NA
Chas Argent	3	4	0	19	NA	-1.07	NA
Scott Thompson	3	4	0	19	NA	-1.07	NA
Steve Svare	2	8	0	18	NA	-5.5	NA
Mike Sengottaiyan	3	2	0	17	NA	1.08	NA
Matt Romey	3	1	0	16	NA	1.58	NA
David Nicholas	2	5	0	15	NA	-1.76	NA
Francis Hardiman	3	0	0	15	NA	3.68	NA
Dave Reinking	2	4	0	14	NA	-1.33	NA
Gene Reimenschneider	2	4	0	14	NA	-1.33	NA
David Rosner	2	3	0	13	NA	-1.09	NA
Eric Morton	2	3	0	13	NA	-1.09	NA
Eric Johnson	2	2	0	12	NA	1	NA
Jim Aikens	2	2	0	12	NA	1	NA
Kevin Ryan	2	1	0	11	NA	1.21	NA
Steve Treatman	1	3	0	8	NA	-1.59	NA
John Knowles	1	2	0	7	NA	-1.22	NA
Rob St. Clair	1	2	0	7	NA	-1.22	NA
Ronald Fajarit	1	2	0	7	NA	-1.22	NA
Chris Castellana	1	1	0	6	NA	1.17	NA
Roger Petronzio	0	6	0	6	NA	-20.85	NA
Don Petros	0	2	0	2	NA	-2.26	NA
Stance Nixon	0	2	0	2	NA	-2.26	NA
David Sessions	0	1	0	1	NA	-1.74	NA
Mario Golfgorin	0	1	0	1	NA	-1.74	NA
Bernie Howell	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Brian Abela	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Dave Coleman	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Ed Zeman	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Eric Walters	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Nadir El-Farra	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Steve Dethlefsen	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA

("Roll Call" Continued from page 3)

SoCal, when we always had new scenarios at every tourney.

HTB!: OK, name your Best and Worst experience.

RM: My best gaming experience was when I finally beat my nemesis Doug Creutz using weak American Infantry versus his weak Italian Infantry in Retribution ASL55, I seem to recall. I'd never won against Doug before and this was a great down to the wire scenario. On the flip side my worst experiences are those against "unwelcome" opponents...only the famous (to the old guys in the Club) PO comes to mind now.

HTB!: What would you like to try next?

RM: My next ASL projects are completing my eASLRBv2, and playing AoO (if it ever comes out). Otherwise I'll keep playing against my son a couple of times or more per month and going to the Tourneys (if the Wife lets me).

HTB!: Top things you'd recommend to a newbie.

RM: For the Newbies amongst us, I have three golden rules:

1. Understand that there is NO rulebook for ASL. The ASLRB is mis-named...it is really the ASL Encyclopedia. You don't read an Encyclopedia cover to cover do you? Until the powers that be come out with a real rule-book, take the ASLRB for what it is, not for what it's called.

2. Now scan (not read for recall) the ASRB Chapters A and B several times (use the step-by-step article in the Classic from the MMP site for areas to scan), use chapter K...setting up and playing through all examples.

3. Finally find a grognard near you and play and play and...well you get the picture. Then come to the SoCal cons...all of them! I'd like to see some new meat...errr new faces.

HTB!: Any final comments?

RM: Gentlemen remember...it is a game, but it is also The Game...roll low (except against me of course). Can I go now teacher? :)

HTB!: Thanks Ron!

"sorry no pics available due to my religion :)"



That's ok, Ron...I managed to find something for you! -ed.

Southern California ASL Club

President	Brandon Liesemeyer President@socalasl.com
Tournament Director	James Aikens WCM@socalasl.com
Webmeister	Paul Simonsen Webmaster@socalasl.com
Challenge Cupmeister	Matt Romey ChallengeCup@socalasl.com
Newsletter Editor	Matthew Cicero Editor@socalasl.com

Contributors

Jim Aikens, Matt Cicero, Robert Hammond, Bruce Kirkaldy, Brandon Liesemeyer, Ron Mosher, Matt Romey, Paul Simonsen, Rob Stai, Scott Thompson

Credits

Charlton, James, ed., The Military Quotation Book, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990.

Blumenson, Martin, The Duel For France, 1944: The Men and Battles That Changed the Fate of Europe, Da Capo Press, 1963.

Special thanks to Rodney Kinney for the use of VASL map and counter images.

ASL and all its components are copyrighted and trademarked by MMP/Hasbro.

Word Find Answer: Did You Find Them All?

AAMG, ACQUIRED, ADVANCE, AMERICAN, APCR, APDS, ARMORED, ARTILLERY, ATTACKER, BERSERK, BRITISH, BROKEN, CANISTER, CHINESE, CONCEAL, COWER, DEFENDER, FANATIC, FINNISH, FIREPOWER, GERMAN, HERO, IIFT, INFANTRY, ITALIAN, JAPANESE, MOLOTOV, OVERRUN, PARTISAN, PHOSPHORUS, RESIDUAL, ROUT, RUSSIAN, SHOCK, SMOKE, SNIPER, WHITE, WOUNDED

So what's the 39th word? Check out Paragraph 5, Word 7 in "What's Inside!"



Upcoming Events...

18 Aug: Hill 621 Summer Tourney
20 Oct: Hit The Beach! Volume 6, Number 4
10 Nov: North-South Melee: Fall Challenge

Did you Know? By Matthew Cicero

Ever considered how effective a Snap Shot (A8.15) can be in dense terrain? Granted, no FFNAM or FFMO DRM apply, the shot leaves no resid and it is resolved as Area Fire...but it can often put an unexpected hurt on enemy units shifting position.

For example, you have three 467s covering a Russian squad in a factory. The Russian moves one hex, out of LOS behind an Interior Wall. Your 467s have no shot, right? Well...how about a Snap Shot? You just might zap him with a 6+2 (12+2 if you are PB!) if you can see the entire hexside he crosses! Now imagine what a bigger Fire Group might pull off! Snap Shots can freeze up an opponent's MPh with some unexpectedly good shots.